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25-Feb-1874

DIOCESAN SYNOD.

To the Clergy and Laity of the Church of England in British Columbia.

DEAR REV. BRETHREN AND BRETHREN OF THE LAITY :—

A general desire for a Diocesan Synod having been expressed, and some matters seriously needing that organization, I invite your co-operation in the election of Lay Representatives in the second week after Easter, with a view to the assembling of a Convention of Bishop, Clergy, and Laity, early in July.

The office of the Convention will be to consider and agree to a declaration of principles and fundamental provisions as the basis upon which the Synod will be formed.

The first assembly will not therefore be the Synod, but a body authorized by the Parishes to agree upon a Constitution, and then, if there be such agreement, to resolve itself into the Synod.

In framing Laws and Regulations respecting Bishop, Clergy and Laity, property, finance, discipline, spread of the Gospel, and in adopting measures proved successful in other branches of our Communion, it must be our endeavour to adhere closely to the principles of the Church of England, of which we desire to remain an integral part. Though a voluntary body, so far as disconnection with the State is concerned, we claim no liberty to choose for ourselves any other system of ecclesiastical order than that of our Mother Church.

The deep importance of subjects to come under consideration presses upon all Electors the great desirability of choosing Representatives well known and trusted for intelligent attachment to the Church, and whose time and energies will be readily and heartily given.

I adopt and recommend to you the Resolutions passed at an influential meeting of Church Committees last month in Victoria, as the guide for our first proceedings and the understanding upon which we meet in Convention.

I append a copy of those Resolutions, and also some directions kindly drawn up from them by the Registrar of the Diocese. Requesting you to take the necessary steps, should you decide to join the Synod, and earnestly trusting that in this important undertaking we may all be guided with wisdom from above, so that our conclusions may be for the promotion of God's glory and the true edification of His Church.

I am,

Dear Rev. Brethren and Brethren of the Laity,
Your sincere friend and Pastor,

G. COLUMBIA.

BISHOP'S CLOSE, VICTORIA, February 25, 1874.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE ELECTION OF LAY REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FIRST CONVENTION.

1. The Roll of Electors is to be entered in a book, and the following declaration is to be signed in the book by every one who desires to become an Elector :—

"I, A—— B——, do solemnly declare that I am a member of the Church of England, and am an accustomed member of the congregation of and do not belong to any other denomination."

2. The Church Committee will appoint a Select Committee to make up the voting roll, and where no Church Committee, the congregation will delegate this duty to three of their body.

3. The Churchwardens or Clergyman will give notice in church or on the church doors, or by both methods, of the intended election, 14 days at least before the time appointed, in the following form :—

"NOTICE.—An election of Lay Representatives to the Convention, for the purpose of establishing a Synod in this Diocese, will take place in this Church on the day of at o'clock. All persons who are seat-holders or members of this congregation, of the age of 18 years, will be entitled to vote on subscribing the declaration in the Roll of Voters, at any time before the election."

} Committee.

4. The election will take place in the vestry or other appropriate place to be appointed by the Committee, at which meeting the Clergyman shall be the Chairman, and in his absence a Chairman shall be appointed by the Committee, who shall take the votes, and whose duty will be to see that no one votes who has not fulfilled the prescribed formalities.

5. Each church or congregation will be entitled to one or more Lay Representative in the following proportion, namely : Two Delegates for 20 or under 20 qualified voters of the age of 18 years ; four Delegates for 50 or under 50 qualified voters, and six Delegates for more than 50 voters.

6. No person can be elected as a Lay Representative unless he is a communicant, and unless he signs the following declaration, also to be entered in the book of votes :—

"I, A— B—, do solemnly declare that I am a communicant of the Church of England, and belong to no other religious denomination."

7. Every Clergyman, or the Churchwardens, shall keep, or cause to be kept, a roll with the names of all the communicants entered therein.

8. Every Lay Representative, when duly elected, shall receive from the Chairman a certificate to the following effect :—

"I hereby certify that at a meeting of the electors of Church, or District, held on the day of 187 A— B—, who is a communicant of this church, was duly elected a Lay Representative to the Convention for the establishment of a Diocesan Synod."

Chairman.

9. The Chairman shall also forward to the Bishop of the Diocese a certificate of the result of the election in the following form :—

"I hereby certify that at a meeting of the electors of Church, or District, held on the day of 187 the following persons, communicants of the Church, were duly elected as Lay Representatives to the Convention for the establishment of a Diocesan Synod :

PROFESSION.

A. B.	of
C. D.	of
E. F.	of
G. H.	of

And I further certify that there are entered on the Roll of Electors persons entitled to vote at this election.

Chairman.

10. In case of the death or resignation of any Lay Representatives so elected as aforesaid, the Church Committee, or where no Church Committee, the electors shall as soon as practicable select some other duly qualified person to fill the vacancy.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE MEETING OF CHURCH COMMITTEES HELD IN VICTORIA, JAN. 5, 1874.

1. "That it is expedient that a Convention be formed consisting of the Bishop, the Clergy of the Diocese holding the Bishop's license, and Lay Delegates for the purpose of organizing a Diocesan Synod."

N^o 5 P^g 2. "That every congregation of the Anglican Church, with twenty or less qualified electors, may elect two Lay Representatives, and every congregation having over twenty qualified electors up to fifty inclusive may elect four Representatives, and having over fifty qualified electors may elect six Representatives."

N^o 3 " 3. "That the election of the Lay Representatives shall be decided by the whole body of seat-holders, and of those who are accustomed members of the congregation not being seat-holders, of the age of eighteen years and upwards who shall sign a declaration as follows:—

I, A—— B——, do solemnly declare that I am a member of the Church of England, and am an accustomed member of the congregation of and do not belong to any other denomination."

N^o 6 " 4. "That no person shall be qualified for election as a Lay Representative, or be permitted to take his seat as a Delegate, unless he be a male communicant of the Church, of the age of twenty-one years, and upwards, and have signed a declaration that he is a communicant of the Church of England, and belongs to no other religious denomination, as follows:— I, A—— B——, do solemnly declare that I am a communicant of the Church of England, and belong to no other religious denomination."

N^o 7 " 5. "That the list of voters shall be made up by a special Church Committee to be selected by the Church Committee of each congregation, and in places where no Church Committee exists, by three persons to be selected by such congregation, as such Committee, and the said list shall be signed by a majority of such Committee, and no one shall be entitled to vote who is not included in such list."

N^o 8 " 6. "That the election for Delegates shall take place on the second Monday after Easter, 1874.

7. "That a certificate of election shall be given to each Representative by the Chairman of the meeting at which the election took place, who shall also forward to the Bishop immediately after the election a certificate of the due election of a representative."

8. "That the Convention of Bishop, Clergy and Laity shall meet the second week of July next, at Victoria."

9. "That no act of the Convention shall be valid and binding unless it has received the assent of the Bishop, a majority of the Clergy, and a majority of the Laity voting by orders."